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THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 1912.

UP TO CITY COMMITTEE.

As the official representatives of the Democratic party of Richmond it is the duty of the City Democratic Committee to provide the plan for the nomination of the new Administrative Board. Richmond has so long had nominations by primary that probably no other plan has even occurred to the great majority of the citizens. But is the primary the best plan under the present conditions? Is it even workable, seeing that over twenty names are now announced as candidates for the board?

Of these twenty odd candidates the fight will not be between the two leaders. Far otherwise, for five men must be chosen, and under a single primary the successful candidates need not have at the outside more than 1,200 votes apiece. That in effect would give the election to less than one-eighth of the registered voters. With twenty candidates in the field, therefore, whatever else might happen under the single primary it would be absolutely certain that the final selection would not be the choice of a majority of the voters, nor would there be any assurance that even a handful of voters would approve unreservedly the ticket so selected. For it must be remembered that Richmond has to choose not five satisfactory individual commissioners, but five men, who, because they are selected for their special fitness, can and will supplement each other in giving Richmond an example of team work in city government.

This defect of the primary is inexcusable when a great number of candidates are running, and it is so recognized in many States where the primary is in use. South Carolina and Mississippi, for example, hold a second primary in which the candidate receiving the smallest number of votes is dropped. This method necessitates two elections, but although it insures the nomination of men who are at least acceptable to a majority of their party in some cases, in others it operates to force out the very men most desired by the majority. In Colorado a system of preferential voting is used for the same purpose.

But what of Richmond? Here the second day primary would be of doubtful legality under the Byrd law, and the preferential primary is a novelty that the City Committee would most likely refuse to consider. Nevertheless, the need for some more flexible and effective method of choice than a rough, roll and tumble primary with twenty-two or twenty-three entries must be suggested.

Never in times of peace has Richmond had greater need of sound wisdom than in the selection of the Administrative Board. Given a workable plan, the people will make no false choice—but the method must be good—and the final decision on the mode of electing the Administrative Board rests with the City Democratic Committee. Confronted with this situation, what will the City Democratic Committee do?

It is up to them!

THE "TITANIC" AND ROOSEVELT.
Perhaps the strangest and most illogical result of the "Titanic" disaster may be its effect upon the candidacy of Mr. Roosevelt for the Republican nomination. No two things, on first thought, could be more disconnected, yet it is now impossible to measure the damage done to the Roosevelt campaign by the happening of the terrible event just when it did. The political bearing of the disaster upon the fortunes of the ex-President may be so heavy that it alone may prevent the realization of his highest aim. The psychological effect of this most terrible marine accident upon the minds of the American people may cause a complete recession of the Roosevelt wave.

What were the people of the United States thinking about last Sunday? What were they getting ready to think more and more about Monday and Tuesday, and the week after that? What current event was uppermost in their minds? To what were they giving their most serious attention? There is but one answer: the overwhelming and upheaving victory of Roosevelt in Pennsylvania. In every State of the Union the people were thinking about the result of the Pennsylvania primary, following as it did close upon the heels of a similar result in Illinois. The thought of the country was concentrated upon Roosevelt. The people were beginning to regard him as a master politician, who might "come back." A widespread disbelief in the potency of the Roosevelt movement had been changed overnight into a belief that he might again sweep the country. The moral effect upon the popular mind of two such successes was tremendous. The Taft managers were speechless, unable to explain; the Roosevelt cap-

tains were jubilating, about to renew and redouble their efforts.

That was the national state of mind on Sunday. The possible psychological moment for Roosevelt was ticking off its first few seconds. A second later and the country had forgotten Roosevelt, because it thrilled with horror and sympathy as it caught the flash that told of the sinking of the "Titanic." Instantly that horrible happening drove all other things from the thoughts of the American people. Common everyday politics was pushed aside; a world tragedy appealed to the elemental fibres of the soul, and hearts of men were gripped with the deepest human feeling. The hundreds of brave men who gave their lives that the women and children might live, the heroes who "though reason chafed and love repined" heard that "voice without reply" and knew that it is man's perdition to be safe when for the race he ought to die, these men became uppermost in the thoughts of the people. The eye of the republic is fastened upon a vessel coming homeward with all that are left of a great ill-fated company. Where men gather together, on the streets, in homes, in offices, in the fields, in the mountains and plains, the one thought is of the "Titanic" and its awful fate.

So it comes about that in the very full tide of his triumph, just when he had gained the eye and ear of the country, Roosevelt has been crossed by fate, and the people have fixed their minds on something else. Many more victories will be needed to rivet Roosevelt in the public attention so firmly again. Men and measures have been defeated in like situations, where some remote and unconnected event has turned hope to ashes. Roosevelt may overcome this reaction of popular interest, but it would be passing strange if the sinking of the "Titanic" should submerge forever the political fortunes of a man to, heretofore, whom fate has been most kind. Will the psychological effect of the sinking of this vessel with its precious human freight off the bleak shores of Newfoundland afford another illustration of the fact that no man is the master of his political fate?

THE CHILDREN'S GARDENS.

Every morning, bright and early, five or six little chaps gather in a vacant back lot that, like so many others in Richmond, lies hidden by houses on both sides. There, among old barrel staves and junk and "hijinks" of all description, these young fellows have planted them a flower garden, and have set out tiny trees, and every day they scale the high brick wall in a youngster's wonderful way and tend the growing things. They have taken a waste place that used to look ugly, and they have made it a sightly place, where violets grow upon an emerald carpet. Sometimes they gather little bunches of violets, perhaps to take to teacher as a gentle bribe for good will, or to mother, as an evidence of that industriousness which will some day be the means of relieving her from the cares that in fact her days and of putting the cooking and the sweeping and the patient tending for others upon somebody else. Instead of running around in the streets, they are doing something useful and congenial, making one of the city's sore spots heal. While their fathers are opining about the candidates for the Administrative Board, these younger citizens act as if they agreed with old Swift when he said: "whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before would deserve better of mankind and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together." These lads do not know it, perhaps, but they are doing impulsively what many cities are trying by suggestion to get their future citizens to do. Many municipalities believe that the children ought to be allowed to make flower gardens and vegetable gardens on the vacant lots that lie in almost permanent disuse. Such gardens give children productive employment and teach them useful things to know, keep them off the streets, and give them something to work for and hope for. Bald spots are made to blossom as the rose, and a dumping ground is transformed into a miniature truck farm. It would make Richmond sightlier and its little citizens better off if here they could generally follow the example of the little fellows who are already tenants at will of a certain back lot up the street.

THE KIRMESSES.

"Curious!" As merrily as it came, so went the Kirmesses dancing into the wings last night, and thousands reluctantly saw this bright and clever picture fade. It brought smiles and merriment and gladness in its blithe, beautiful way for three days, aiding two noble and worthy causes. "The Kirmesses" was a real show—not an amateurish crudity which all condoned for sweet charity's sake. Everybody who went agrees that it was the most attractive production of the year. It was worth ever so many times the admission. Some there are who think that as to a performance for charity, newspapers are nothing more than press agents, who boost regardless of merit, but it was not so with the Kirmesses. It deserved every complimentary word that was said about it, and now that roughs are painfully departing from cheeks and lips that never really needed it, and now that peasants and princes are plain clothes men again, it must be repeated that the Kirmesses was a "perfectly corking" show that scored the hit of the season. There have been Kirmesses all over the country, but the Richmond Kirmesses

was "some Kirmesse." Here's wishing it may be an annual event, a sort of perennial congress of Richmond's beauty and chivalry!

QUAKED BEFORE SHAKEN.

It is now learned that those newspapers and persons who suffered an attack of nervous quaking in apprehension of the distraction of or serious damage to the Panama Canal as the sequence of the Chiriqui eruption, quaked before they were shaken. The lurid report a ship captain brought to Mobile about the lava-spouting and death-dealing activity of that volcano proves to have been of the Mole, St. Nicholas or Shanghai war story fabrication brand. Chiriqui, according to all latest authentic information, was behaving herself very well, and had been so doing for some time. But, even were this not the case, there would be no reason to fear a sympathetic reduction of the Panama Canal to a rubbish heap.

There are volcanic formations and extinct and more or less active volcanoes both north and south of the Canal Zone, but the mountain ranges in which they are located terminate on either side from a hundred to a hundred and fifty miles from that area, and for some distance before touching it, dwindle practically into foothills. The Canal Zone is composed of stratifications geologically independent of the formations flanking it, and is sufficiently remote from the centres of either their present or possible future volcanic and seismic disturbances to insure against any appreciable response to these much less disastrous consequential upheavals.

Volcanologists, seismologists and geologists have investigated and studied these conditions exhaustively with reference to the question of the safety of the canal, and give almost absolute assurance of the work's freedom from danger of being injured by seismic or volcanic phenomena. Some of the most violent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that have occurred "approximately near" the zone in late years would have passed unnoticed but for the seismographic recordings.

It is true that shocks have been felt on the line of the canal, but invariably they have been slight, and in the nature simply of subsiding tremors due to distant agitations. The eastern and western direction of the zone formation, aside from its distinctive character, is regarded as a geological guarantee against anything worse.

A VICIOUS JOKER.

The most glaring defect of our civil service system, the very point at which it breaks down, is illustrated in a recent executive order of President Taft. In this particular instance, Mr. Taft slipped in a political joker, but he also widened a fault of what should be an almost perfect system. Heretofore, the rural carriers have been selected from a civil service list, and the highest man on the list got the job. The President now orders that the choice of rural carriers shall be made from the three highest names. This gives elasticity to the appointing officer and enables him to exercise personal and political favoritism to one against the other two, and puts the appointee under obligation to him. The 40,000 rural carriers constitute a powerful political machine. Mr. Taft's order triples the power of using them as a political weapon. Rural carriers in the South are among the most ardent Republican missionaries. They circulate among the people and report back to the local bosses most valuable political information, which is in turn transmitted to headquarters at Washington.

The point at which the whole civil service system breaks down is the discretionary power vested in the appointing officer. If the civil service should stand for anything, it should be that the best man should have the appointment. This is by no means the case under the prevailing rules. Large discretion is intrusted to the appointing officer, and he does not have to appoint the man who has passed the best examination—in fact, the law seems to be framed especially to prevent the best man from getting the position in cases where other candidates have more political pull or are of more acceptable political faith. The right of the highest man to the job ought to be absolute and not depend upon the often vicarious discretion of a subordinate appointing officer who is dependent upon a political party for his own job. All discretion should be taken away from appointing officers. Until it is, the civil service will remain a farce.

The Progressive Farmer is just crazy about Governor Mann's definition of education, which is "education is training for the mastery of environment." The Progressive Farmer, after approving that definition, doubtless agrees with Goldsmith: "The premises being thus settled, I proceed to observe that the concatenation of self-interest, proceeding in a reciprocal duplicate ratio, naturally produces a problematical dialogue, which in some measure proves that the essence of spirituality may be referred to the second predicable."

On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

The Old Man's Wooden Leg.
My old wooden leg was made out'n a tree,
And it was made out'n a poplar, you see.
'Twas Normandy poplar, the kind that 'grows fast,
Of poplar less that 'un will sure be the last.
Oh, I was so proud of my new wooden leg,
But sudden my pride was took down quite a peg,
For that doggone poplar it started to grow.

So that I could not navigate much, you know.
My good leg stayed short, like 'twas meant fer to be,
But that doggone leg which was made of a tree.
Kept growin' and growin', although you may scoff,
I had to keep sawin' the rot dum' thing off.
When I would leave home to go down to the store,
My poplar leg would grow six inches or more.
It made me lopsided when I tried to walk,
And soon that off leg was the common town talk.

It kept on a-growin' in wonderful style,
And I had to carry a saw all the while;
I sawed off enough in the course of a week.
To keep me in froward a month, as I used to speak,
I had to stay indoors 'most all of that fall.
For I didn't have time to go out at all,
I had to keep sawin' and sawin', you see.

To beat out that leg which was made from a tree.
It nigh driv' me crazy and daffy because
I found I was wearin' out too many saws;
And saws are expensive, you'd have to agree.
If you had a leg that was made from a tree.

At last I got tired of sawin' the thing,
And then I got a brilliant idea, by jingo,
I planted my leg in the old public square,
And it started growin' right up in the air.

And then 'most as soon as you could wink your eye,
The town had a flagpole three hundred feet high;
It kept on growin', and never will stop.
In two hours you couldn't see quite to the top.

No flag to the top of that flagpole will get.

You see the blame thing is still growin'—
And that is the end of the story of me
And the wooden leg which was made out'n a tree.

According to Uncle Abner,
It is getting so it ain't quite as much of a disgrace to be a Democrat as it used to be.

There is only one safe way to write a love letter to a married woman, and that is to write it to your wife.

It is pretty hard to get an old maid to admit that she remembers the Spanish-American War.

Some men are born fools, and others try to interfere in a quarrel between a man and wife.

There ain't no feller that kin spread as much gloom in a given time as a pessimistic chinstrap player.

It seems as though coffee and doughnuts are never going to go out of style. They are among the world's most famous afflictions.

If there is some strange thing that you want to buy and don't know where to get it, try a drug store.

Caught on the Fly.
It is only an hour from Baltimore to Washington, but it will take the man who is nominated in Baltimore longer than that to get to the White House.

The chances that Lorimer will serve a full term in the Senate before the investigation is completed seems to be growing brighter every day.

Search is being made for a Kansas City girl who is believed to a fortune of \$100,000. Perhaps some duke has captured her already.

Ole James, of Kentucky, who weighs in the neighborhood of 400 pounds, will add some weight to the Senate.

Eggs were thrown at the actors in a play at Philadelphia one night this week. There must have been some millionaires present.

La Follette says equal suffrage has passed the stage of argument. But the women will continue to argue just the same.

Exonerating Dr. Wiley seems to be about all they have time to do in Washington in the last two or three years.

The Spanish Cabinet is going to place Alfonso could never qualify as a union cabinetmaker.

Voice of the People

The South's Cause Right.
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:
Sir—There is one section of the Sunday "Times-Dispatch" which no merely chains the attention of the writer, but which possesses an interest akin to that of holy ground.

Although born too late to enter the

ABE MARTIN

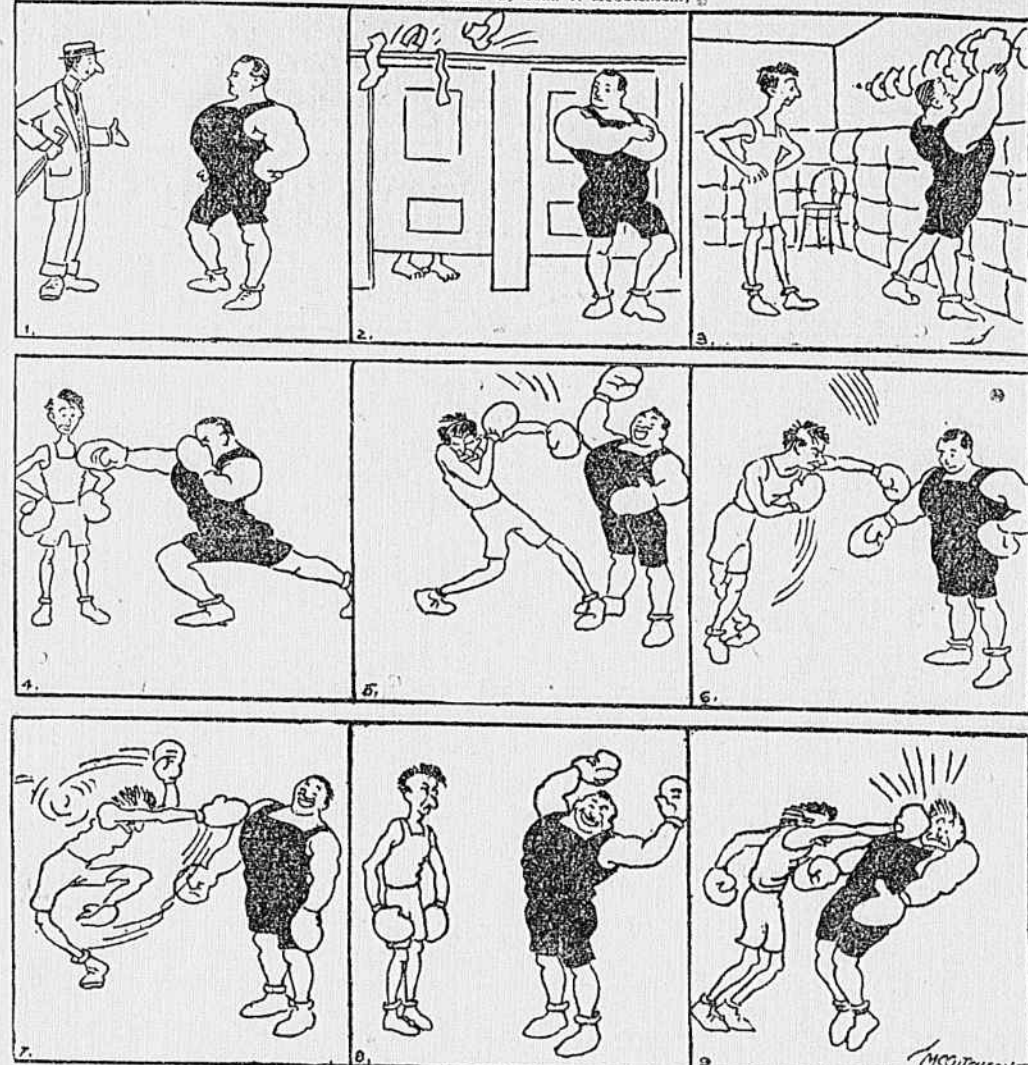


Aside from the actin', Uncle Tom's Cabin, at the Melodeon last night, wuz a 'howlin' success. It's now time I push screen doors th' wrong way.

THE BOXING LESSON.

By John T. McCutcheon.

(Copyright, 1912, By John T. McCutcheon.)



P. S.—This cartoon is eight-ninths true.

arena of strife, each added year impresses the writer more and more with two thoughts. The first, that the South represented that constitutional law by which the builders of our nation not only sought to secure the right of the individual against no matter how great the majority, but as thoroughly as possible to conform the law of this country to the demands of Almighty God; while on the other hand, the North was the representative of that doctrine of majority fiat which utterly subverts the law of the Creator.

The second, that while the South "lost," that loss was purely the analogue of the defeat which came to Him who, for our sake, was crucified, and buried. And therefore that to us of the South the result of the war was merely that crucifixion which right must inevitably undergo ere right prevail, and must be looked upon as our devastation from those human passions which would militate against our ultimate success in that duty which strictly belongs to and cannot be faithfully performed by any other sprang from the mother of the colonies—a duty to which our defeat and our sufferings were but the necessary step in our education and our growth.

Fortunately more than a third of a century passed among the Northern has enabled the writer, now at an age at which logical deduction should aid the fire of youth to closely scrutinize and carefully measure those conditions which exist in this section of the nation and trace them to their cause, not with any intention of unduly admonishing on that which appears to be a fatal, but purely for the purpose of aiding in the substitution of that which is right for that which is wrong.

In the State of Pennsylvania the Constitution makes certain strong and definite provisions for the preservation of the right of the individual, and to that end Article I deals solely with that subject, and closes with the following section:

"Section 24. To guard against transgressions of the high powers which we have delegated, we declare that everything in this article is excepted out of the general powers of government and shall forever remain inviolate."

This Article I is therefore the Magna Charta of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and its first section reads:

"All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent and indefeasible rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing and protecting property and reputation; and of pursuing their own happiness."

In the North "law" has reached the point where it is regarded as an instrument by which others may be penalized, a position utterly at variance with our old-time Southern view, which accorded with the law of God and the logical deduction of man.

That law was that expression of the right of the individual which should guide him in his course of action toward all other beings.

As a result, directly in defiance of the provisions of this basic article, statutory enactments have been placed on record which utterly violate the letter as well as the spirit of the Constitution.

For example, enactments having as their basis the assumption that "police" covers of an incorporated city may extend literally without restriction, have secured the prosecution and punishment of citizens merely on "information," a course directly and especially interdicted by Section 10.

The North must, not merely may, be summarized as follows:

"The only 'god' worshiped is the dollar."

Majority fiat, no matter how utterly it abnegates constitutional law or defies the law of God, is assumed to be correct.

The position of every wage-earner is vastly inferior to that of the old-time slave, for while the slave was fed, clothed, housed, furnished medical attendance for himself and his family, from birth to death, the Northern worker is discharged at the pleasure of his employer, and can secure no aid for himself or his family, and must go to the poorhouse when he becomes unable to work, or become a "tramp," against whom the sole cry is: "Move on. You cannot stay here any more to rest."

The Northern citizens are a heterogeneous admixture of all nationalities, the new blood of which seeps this area with the intention of substituting for liberty that form of unlicensed predation secured by the substitution of the fiat of the majority for law and the service of Almighty God.

The duty of the South is the preservation of that eternal spark of right for the protection of which our mothers underwent crucifixion as their husbands fought and died, and that they ray of light has its existence alone in the constitutional law as our statutory inscription of the law of God.

Frequently it has been said to the writer: "But you were in the wrong; you were defeated, and you must not wave the bloody shirt."

To such a remark there is but one answer. At Jesus of Nazareth was slain by majority fiat, so was the South, outnumbered five to one, in its defense of right; but every gray need which our weeping women buried was a seed of eternal right, upon which the life of this nation depends, and each shall live—may, lives—again at His call.

MILTON A. NOBLE.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Clara Barton.
Name apart in woman's annals;
High on the scroll of noble deeds another Nightingale.
With genius single-eyed to mankind's woe,
She came upon the scene empowered to act.

A hero woman; missioned for a time
She moved among her suffering kind,
Nor flood, nor fire or war's alarm deterred;
A Joan had not less of fear, nor for
her country nobler wrought.

Than this pale Sister of the Charities.
A soldier woman; meek in obedience,
She moved at night, a patriot, among
her nation's dead and dying;

Hands ready, seeking for their toil,
To assuage the throbbing brow, the
gashed flesh.

And soft words to soothe the fevered
and place
She scattered seeds of promise every-
where;

In devastation's wake new gardens
And fields were blossomed.
Nights turned to days, so eloquent in
ministration.

That praise to monument so enduring
cannot add
To wreath of laurel and crown of
olive.

Weaved from assuaged pain and whis-
pered words of dying men,
Through passes narrow and morasses
On battlefields she strode with chosen
band of Spartans.

Unfurl the flag! insignia of the Cross;
Its every eye protection to proclaim!
To work; bring gladness to the eye of
soldier martyr.

And to the cheek its color, strength to
be declaimed.
Of noble manhood's life.
Moist the parched lip while battles
wage.

And combats clash; where mothers
may not go,
Or sisters cheering word, nor k's as
wife may bless.
My countrymen! what praise for one
Whose immortals are wrought of
deeds.

LAURA HULL MORRIS.

Washington, D. C.

ful. No paper that I have seen had had so rare and charming a conception of the awful dignity of men going down to death as men, as was this editorial.

Yours sincerely,

April 17, 1912. SAM W. MEER.

Save Qui Pout.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:
Sir—It is narrated that Madame de Stael reproached the great Napoleon for his indifference to women. He replied: "Madame, I am very fond of my wife."

He was French, Corsican, Latin. But the Anglo-Saxons are fond not only of their wives, but of their women and children, and with great humility I venture to ask the suffragettes, who I hope will reply "without epithets," what about the "Titanic"? The wireless messages, in pathetic yet triumphant tones, tell us that the poor wailing men surrendered the lifeboats to the women and children and accepted watery graves for themselves with calm heroism, with noble fortitude. Here, indeed, were "votes for women."

Ave et vale!
Richmond, April 17, 1912.

An Appreciation.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:
Sir—Whether this letter receives more than your casual glance, yet the intent and purpose of it is to compliment your paper in the publication of the excellent editorial which appeared in your issue of the 17th on the dreadful, pathetic disaster. The man who wrote that editorial is deserving of the commendations of the readers of The Times-Dispatch.

E. C. GAERTNER.

Richmond, April 17, 1912.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

The Tournament.

Can you give me a good account of the tournament, which used to flourish in Virginia? B. W.

It is not recalled where in the literature local to the State one may come across such a description. Perhaps some reader will be good enough to indicate a place.

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